

**William Preston to George Washington, May 27, 1774,
Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers.
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FROM COLONEL WILLIAM PRESTON.

FINCASTLE May 27th. 1774.

DEAR SIR

Agreeable to my Promise I directed Mr. Floyd an Assistant to Survey your Land on Cole River on his Way to the Ohio, which he did and in a few Days afterwards sent me the Plot by Mr. Thomas Hog. Mr. Spotswood Dandridge who left the Surveyors on the Ohio after Hog Parted with them, wrote me that Mr. Hog and two other Men with him had never since been heard of. I have had no Opportunity of writing to Mr. Floyd Since. Tho' I suppose he will send me the Courses by the first Person that comes up, if so I shall make out the Certificate and send it down. This I directed him to do when we parted to prevent Accidents. But I am really affraid the Indians will hinder them from doing any Business of Vallue this Season as the Company being only 33 and dayly decreasing were under the greatest Apprehension of Danger when Mr. Dandridge parted with them.

It has been long disputed by our Hunters whether Louisa or Cumberland Rivers was the Boundary between us and the Cherokees. I have taken the Liberty to inclose to you a Report made by some Scouts who were out by my Order; and which Sets that matter beyond a Doubt.¹ It is say'd the Cherrokees claim the Land to the Westward of the Louisa & between Cumberland M [mutilated] and the ohio. If so, and our Government gives it up

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we loose all the most Valluable part of that Country. The Northern Indians Sold that Land to the English at the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744. by the Treaty of Logs Town in 1752 and by that at Fort Stanwix in 1768. At that Time the Cherrokees laid no Claim to that Land & how the[y] come to do it now I cannot imagine.

I have wrote twice to his Lordship on this Subject. If it is not disagreeable to you I would take it as a great Favour if you would Converse with his Excellency on this Matter; and endeavour to have it considered in Council. Most of the officers have Entered their Lands below the Louisa; but I am almost certain the Surveyors will not Survey any there, untill they have further Instructions. My Reasons for taking Enter [mutilated] below that River was, that his Lordship gave Connolly and Warrenstaff Warrants for their Claims at the Falls; but I am doubtful that would not be a sufficient Warrant for me to Survey the Land & Sign Certificates.

Your taking some Trouble on this Head will be doing a great Service to the Officers, and a very particular Favour to

Dr Sir your most Obedt. and very hble Servt. WM. PRESTON

1 FINCASTLE COUNTY SCR. Richard Stanton Edward Sharp Ephraim Drake, and William Harrel came before me a Justice of the Peace for the said County and made Oath on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God: that Agreeable to Instructions given by Colo. William Preston to William Russell your Deponents were Employ'd as Runners to Scout to the Westward of Clinch Settlement; and to Reconnoitre the Rivers of Cumberland & Louisa so far down as to be able to Judge and return a Just account upon Oath Not only of the approach of an Enemy; but also a true account which of the aforesaid Rivers the Boundary Line Terminates on: which was Settled by Colo. Donalson between Virginia and the Cheerekees In Obedience thereto Your Deponents Marched 15th Day of April towards Powells Valley and after geting there finding no fresh Indian Signs: Your Deponents Agreeable to Orders; did about four Miles below the mouth of the Upper North fork of Powells River begin to trace the Lines and with much Difficulty followed the Same crossing first Cumberland Mountain then falling on one fork of Cumberland River, Which the line kept down about Ten Miles, your Deponents there finding the Line Left the aforesd. watercourse did trace the Same crossing a Ridge of Mountains about a North North West Course till it Struck another branch of Cumberland called the North fork thence continuing near the Same course across the North for of Cumberland over another Mountain the Line Struck a fork of Louisa River, which Colo. Donalsons Company had marke[d] about Ten Miles down; Your Deponents then Marched down the same creek to where it emptied into the main North fork of Louisa which is the longest of any of the branches of Said River; your Deponents farther Marched down the River till they came to Such Hunters Camps which from the Letters of their Names on trees fully Satisfied Your Deponents it is the Verry River Called by the Hunters Louisa Since called

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Kentucky which empties about seventy five Miles above the Falls into Ohio and your Deponents declare they afterwards Returned the most Suspected Ware Paths Indians used to travel through that Country but saw no fresh Signs; and farther your Deponents say they lost no more time than the Nature of the Journey did require and returned to their Homes the 6th Day of May Sworn before me this 7th Day of May, 1774 WM. RUSSELL [Brigadier-General Russell, whose son, Colonel William Russell, represented Fayette County in the Kentucky legislature from 1789 to 1823.]